

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 22, 2005. Claims 31-37 are presented for examination. Claims 31 - 34 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Claims 31 and 34 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 31 and 33-37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,657,665 (Guidash) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,870,495 (Kinoshita et al.). Claim 32 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guidash in view of Kinoshita et al. and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,892,541 (Merrill).

As shown above, Applicant has amended independent Claims 31 and 34 in terms that more clearly define what he regards as his invention. Applicant submits that these amended claims, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

Claim 31 is directed to, *inter alia*, a method of driving a solid image pickup device, including a step of transferring electric charges generated in a photoelectric conversion unit during one accumulation period to a charge-voltage conversion unit by the charge transfer means. The transferring step includes a first transferring step and second transferring step. After a first signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the first transferring step, the charge-voltage conversion unit is reset. After the charge-voltage conversion unit is reset, a second signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the second transferring step.

Guidash relates to an amplification-type image sensor in which charges are transferred from pixels to charge conversion regions. The pixels may share a reset transistor and amplifier. However, nothing has been found in Guidash that would teach or suggest “transferring electric charges generated in the photoelectric conversion unit during one accumulation period to the charge-voltage conversion unit by the charge transfer means, wherein the transferring step comprises a first-transferring step and a second transferring step, a first signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the first transferring step, the charge-voltage conversion unit is reset after the first signal is read out, and a second signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the second transferring step after the charge-voltage conversion unit it reset,” as recited in Claim 31 (emphasis added).

Kinoshita does not remedy the deficiencies of Guidash. Kinoshita relates to an image sensing apparatus including a plurality of pixels arranged by rows and columns to sense an optical image. Kinoshita discusses transferring electric charges by applying pulses to transfer electrodes a plurality of times to transfer charges of one pixel. However, Kinoshita does not teach or suggest “transferring electric charges generated in the photoelectric conversion unit during one accumulation period to the charge-voltage conversion unit by the charge transfer means, wherein the transferring step comprises a first-transferring step and a second transferring step, a first signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the first transferring step, the charge-voltage conversion unit is reset after the first signal is read out, and a second signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the second transferring step after the charge-voltage conversion unit

it reset," as recited in Claim 31 (emphasis added).

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 31 is patentable over Guidash and Kinoshita, whether considered separately or in any permissible combination (if any).

Independent Claim 34 recite features similar to those discussed above with respect to Claim 31. Claim 34 recites a control circuit for controlling the solid state image pickup device to perform a transferring step for transferring electric charges generated in the photoelectric conversion unit during one accumulation period to the charge-voltage conversion unit by the charge transfer means, wherein the transferring step comprises a first transferring step and a second transferring step, a first signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the first transferring step, the charge-voltage conversion unit is reset after the first signal is read out, and a second signal is read out on a basis of electric charges transferred by the second transferring step after the charge-voltage conversion unit is reset.

Therefore, Claim 34 is also believed to be patentable over Guidash and Kinoshita for the reasons discussed above.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

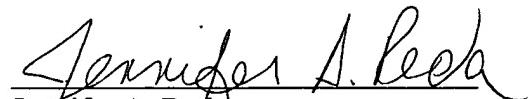
The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of

the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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